

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT MARILYN BERGER BYLINER PAGE 21,
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, WASHPOST HEADLINED "KISSINGER SOUGHT
ELP BEFORE TRIP."

2. IN THE 72 HOURS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE MIDDLE
EAST, HENRY A. KISSINGER SOUGHT SOLACE AND SUPPORT FROM
AIDES, FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, TRYING TO FIND A
WAY TO SHORE UP HIS PERSONAL INTEGRITY AGAINST CHARGES
THAT HE HAD INITIATED A SERIES OF WIRETAPS.

3. THE SECRETARY OF STATE CONSIDERED RESIGNING. HE CON-
SIDERED NOT JOINING PRESIDENT NIXON ON THE TRIP THAT IS
TO MAKE THE NEW AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

4. INTERVIEWS WITH HIS ASSOCIATES SHOW THAT KISSINGER WAS
PREOCCUPIED AND TROUBLED, CONCERNED ABOUT HIS OWN REPUTA-
TION AND WITH WHAT HE SAW AS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE
FOREIGN POLICY HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE CONDUCTING. HE WANTED
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ADVICE AND REASSURANCE.

5. HE SPOKE TO MANY PEOPLE PRIVATELY. THEN HE WENT PUBLIC IN THE EMOTIONAL OUTBURST OF HIS SALZBURG PRESS CONFERENCE.

6. "A GUY CAN ONLY TAKE SO MUCH," SAID ONE OF HIS CLOSEST CONFIDANTS. "HE WAS REALLY UPSET."

7. THE SECRETARY'S DEEP CONCERN WITH THE ISSUES OF WATER-GATE HAD ITS ORIGIN IN LAST THURSDAY'S WASHINGTON PRESS CONFERENCE. IT WAS CALLED MAINLY TO DISCUSS THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT HE WAS QUESTIONED ABOUT HIS ROLE IN THE WIRE-TAPPING. HE WAS EVEN ASKED WHETHER HE HAD RETAINED COUNSEL "IN PREPARATION FOR A DEFENSE AGAINST A POSSIBLE PERJURY INDICTMENT."

8. THAT QUESTION, ACCORDING TO ONE AID, WAS THE ONE THAT REALLY GOT UNDER HIS SKIN. "IT ANNOYED HIM TO TEARS," THE AIDE SAID. DESCRIBING THE PRESS CONFERENCE TO A FRIEND A HALF-HOUR LATER, HE SAID THAT MORE THAN HALF THE QUESTIONS DEALT WITH WIRE-TAPPING. "IF THIS KEEPS UP," HE REPORTEDLY SAID, "I'M GOING TO RESIGN."

9. ON SATURDAY, KISSINGER SAW MIKE MANSFIELD, THE MAJORITY LEADER OF THE SENATE. IT WAS AT A BREAKFAST TO WHICH KISSINGER HAD INVITED THE MONTANA DEMOCRAT THE WEEK BEFORE. "HE WAS IN SOME DISTRESS," MANSFIELD RECALLED YESTERDAY. "WE DISCUSSED OTHER MATTERS, BUT THEN WE GOT TO THE QUESTION OF WIRETAPPING."

10. SAID MANSFIELD: "HE FELT IT MADE IT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO CONDUCT THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES AS THE AGENT OF THE PRESIDENT. HE INDICATED THAT IT WOULD BE AN IMPOSSIBLE JOB TO CARRY OUT THAT RESPONSIBILITY AND HAVE THIS OTHER THING HANGING OVER HIM AND THAT HE MIGHT HAVE TO CONSIDER RESIGNING."

11. "I TOLD HIM NOT TO EVEN THINK OF IT," MANSFIELD RECALLED.

12. NEVERTHELESS, MANSFIELD SAID THAT ON SUNDAY KISSINGER

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WAS SO DISTURBED THAT HE CALLED THE SENATOR AT HOME. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE CONTINUING ATTACKS ON HIS CREDIBILITY AND HONESTY AND SAID HE WAS CONSIDERING NOT GOING WITH THE PRESIDENT TO THE MIDDLE EAST BECAUSE HE WOULD BE UNDER SOME SORT OF A CLOUD," SAID MANSFIELD. "I TOLD HIM 'DON'T YOU DARE THINK THAT WAY. YOU GO; YOU YOU'RE NEEDED; YOU CAN BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL; THE COUNTRY DEPENDS ON YOU...'"

13. MANSFIELD SAID: "I TOLD HIM TO ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES AND DO WHAT THE REST OF US DO WITH CRITICISM: TO TRY TO ADD ANOTHER LAYER OF SKIN ON."

14. BY SUNDAY NIGHT KISSINGER WAS STILL SEETHING. FRIENDS WHO SAW HIM AT A DINNER PARTY SAID HE WAS COOLER, COLDER THAN USUAL. "I THOUGHT HE WAS LESS WARM AND FUNNY THAN USUAL," SAID ONE FRIEND. "HE KEPT SAYING THAT THIS WAS AN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION, AND REPEATING THAT HE HAD NOT INSTITUTED THE WIRETAPPING."

15. THAT MORNING A STORY HAD APPEARED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES REPEATING A REPORT THAT KISSINGER WAS LINKED TO THE FBI ORDER ENDING THE WIRETAPS. THE SAME DAY THE WASHINGTON POST CARRIED AN EDITORIAL URGING THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE "TO RECALL HIM AND TO DO ITS BEST TO DETERMINE WHETHER HE SPOKE THE TRUTH."

16. AN AIDE SAID THESE ARTICLES MADE HIM FEEL HE WAS BEING MISUNDERSTOOD AND THAT HE WAS BEING UNFAIRLY CRITICIZED. THE AIDE SAID THAT SINCE THURSDAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE IT WAS "PRETTY CLEAR THAT HE WAS UPSET AND IRRITATED BY THE LINE OF QUESTIONING."

17. HE WAS ALSO DESCRIBED AS "VERY TIRED" FOLLOWING HIS FOUR WEEKS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND AS BEING "IN A HIGHLY EMOTIONAL STATE."

18. WHEN KISSINGER LEFT FOR SALZBURG, AIDES WERE NOT AWARE THAT HE WAS PLANNING TO HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF A STATEMENT, BUT AN AIDE SAID YESTERDAY THAT HE WAS PROBABLY EAGER TO CLEAR THE AIR NOW, UNCLASSIFIED

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RATHER THAN WAITING A WEEK WHILE HE WAS IN DAILY MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE MIDDLE EAST THAT WOULD PROBABLY NOT PERMIT TIME FOR A FULL PRESS CONFERENCE.

19. WHEN HE SPOKE HE ALREADY HAD IN HIS HANDS THE NEWSWEEK ARTICLE THAT WAS HEADLINED, "AN UGLY BLOT ON MR. CLEAN?" WHICH HE REFERRED TO IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE. THE DAILY NEWS REPORT HAD PROBABLY ALSO BROUGHT HIM YESTERDAY'S NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL WHICH SAID THAT KISSINGER "SEEMS TO BE VULNERABLE TO THE CHARGE OF DISSEMBLING," AND WHICH ADDED THAT SOONER OR LATER THIS WHOLE DISMAL EPISODE MUST HAVE ITS FULL AIRING."

20. EVEN BEFORE THESE ARTICLES APPEARED, KISSINGER WAS DESCRIBED BY ONE CONFIDANT AS FEELING THAT HE WAS BEING

SUBJECTED TO CRITICISM HE IS IN NO POSITION TO ANSWER.
"HE'S VERY SENSITIVE," THIS FRIEND SAID, "AND THIS WAS
HITTING BELOW THE BELT." HE ADDED: "HE WAS REALLY UPSET
BY THESE INNUENDOS AND CHARGES RESULTING FROM LEAKED
INFORMATION...AND HIS HANDS ARE TIED BEHIND HIS BACK. HE
CAN'T TALK BACK ABOUT SECRET INFORMATION...HE'S WILLING TO

TAKE ON ANYONE BUT HE THINKS THIS IS UNFAIR CRITICISM..."

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21. HIS FRIENDS AGREE THAT THE CRITICISM, IN THE WORDS OF
ONE, "HAS HURT VERY DEEPLY." THERE IS THE SENSE THAT
KISSINGER FEELS--ALTHOUGH HE HAS NEVER EXPRESSED IT--
THAT HE HAS DONE SO MUCH FOR THE NATION AND IS NOW BEING
TREATED SO SHABBILY, THAT HE IS BECOMING THE VICTIM OF A
KIND OF WITCH HUNT. SISCO

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